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Period 4

AP English Language and Composition

Students are constantly seen worrying about numerous sorts of problems which occur constantly in their daily lives. The problems range from happenings at home to grades in school. However one of the situations which occur to disrupt the students in school is the issue of class rank. The issue affects a select group of students, this group being the students competing to be at the top. The class rank is determined by mathematically summarizing a student’s academic record and then comparing the score with others in the graduating class. (College Admission) The rank is higher if the student takes classes of increased difficulty. Joshua Waitzman, a student at Browns University, stated that in most cases, the rank of a student can rest within a hundredth of a point. A lot of the students who had a “solid” B were given a struggling chance to even get into college with their class ranks. Joshua Waitzman graduated fourth in his class and took ten advance placement courses. (ebscohost Trouble in the ranks)

Class ranks are useful when there is a normal spread of grades throughout the class. However with more and more schools graduating kids who have, even at the bottom of the class, A’s , the class rank is no longer useful in determining the students ability. A superintendent of Pennsylvania argued that class rank actually hurts a student’s chance of getting into college. Also he stated that a high percent of high schools have dropped class rank and those students have a likely chance of getting into college. (No child left average) Another article states that removing class rank can help relieve the pressure on the students. Many people believe valedictorians are one in a few, however the number of valedictorians are more numerous then there are spots in Ivy League schools.(admissions.com) According to Mary Beth Marklein “Of 562 schools surveyed in 2002, 15% said class rank is of no importance; 16% said it was of limited importance” (More public high schools are dropping class ranking) The overall problem is that many schools are using class rank when in actuality there are more reliable and less stressful ways of finding a student’s competence.

Students are not the only group to be fretting about the class rank issue. Parents of the students and school officials are worrying about the competitive stress that is being applied to the students. The School officials see that students worrying about being at the top of the class are selecting classes that will improve their GPA. The problem is that even though the student takes the class, they will not necessarily learn the material being taught; instead the student will focus on the grades. The parents are mainly concerned about emotional stress. Along with the concern about stress the parents are hopping by dropping class rank will make their son or daughter more viable for college (more public high schools dropping class rank 2nd). In Glastonbury, the education board was finalizing a plan to remove class rank, however not entirely. The class rank would only be mentioned to honor the top three of the graduating class at graduation and top three for the newspaper. (Glastonbury )

The issue of class rank is sensitive to some and negligible to many. The effect of class rank pertains to mainly the students who are currently maintaining a high GPA. Many students are indifferent about class rank being reported, except for the students who have strived to take difficult classes and maintain good grades just to rank 40th in their class.

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